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# Laus Patriae Celestis.

TRANSLATION OF AN ANCIENT  
LATIN HYMN.



ALBANY:  
JOEL MUNSELL.  
1867.

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## INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE Poem, a Portion of which is here freely translated, is an elaborate and elegant Production of the Middle Ages. It was written by Bernard, a Monk or Abbot of Clugni, who flourished in the 12th Century, and is, perhaps, the most beautiful of the many Latin Hymns which have sprung from the Abbeys of France. The favourite Passages in our popular Hymnology are those which give Expression to what one of these old Latin Poets has called "the heavenly Home-sickness;" but they all seem passionless and cold by the Side of these glowing Hexameters.

The original Verses, uniting the leonine and tailed Rhyme, with every Line broken into three equal Parts, present a Metre so strange and difficult, that the Poet in his dedicatory Epistle declares that Nothing but especial Grace and Inspiration could have enabled him to bring his great Work to an End. The following Lines, with which the subjoined Translation commences, shew the Structure of the Verse :

“ Hic breve vivitur, hic breve plangetur, hic breve fletur,  
 Non breve vivere, non breve plangere, retribuetur.  
 O retributio ! stat brevis actio, vita perennis;  
 O retributio ! cœlica mansio stat lue plenis,  
 Qui datur et quibus, æther egentibus et cruce dignis,  
 Sidera vermibus, optima fontibus, astra malignis.”

The chief Defect of the Poem is its Want of Progress. It eddies round the Subject, recurring again and again to Illustrations and Thoughts which

before have been thoroughly treated and dismissed. This Blemish has been obviated, as far as possible, in this free Translation. But the hopeful, liberal, and humane Theology which breathes through the whole Poem, the Spirit of which is indicated in the Lines above quoted, has been rendered according to the obvious Tone and Inspiration of the Poet. The whole Work, entitled *De Contemptu Mundi*, is of great Length. That Portion of which the Translation is here given, can be found in Trench's *Sacred Latin Poetry*, in the Astor Library.

O. A. M.

*Cherry Valley,*  
Feb. 20, 1859.





## LAUS PATRIÆ CELESTIS.



LIFE now so brief, in its Joys  
and its Tears,

Will find Retribution in on-  
coming Years ;

O blest Retribution ! a Moment of Strife,  
And Time will be merged in perennial  
Life ;

O blest Retribution ! which dawns on  
our Sight,

From thy full flowing Glories, fair Man-  
sion of Light !



8      *Laus Patriæ Celestis.*

Where the Lowly will breathe in thy  
Æther divine,

And thy Stars on the Sinful in Whiteness  
will shine.

For here is the Battle, but there the  
Reward,

And Refreshment and Peace in the  
Towers of the Lord;

When, the Mysteries solved and the  
Glories expressed,

They'll forever repose in their Sabbath  
of Rest.

The Hebrew from Egypt will travel  
forth free,

And find in yon Canaan a long Jubilee;  
Will dwell in that quiet and luminous  
Land,

With Throngs of the Ransomed of  
Israel's Band;

And the Faithful, now Pilgrim, long  
torn by the Thorns,  
Will inherit a World which all Beauty  
adorns;  
And there, as they track its strange  
Streams to their Springs,  
Will meet, Face to Face, with the King  
of all Kings.

Majesty, Wisdom, and sanctified Peace,  
Shall rule in that Realm where Tumult  
shall cease,  
And Leah and Rachel to Jacob shall bring  
Their Pitchers celestial fresh-filled from  
the Spring :  
And then, O our Syon, at Peace and at  
Rest,  
He'll clasp in thy Halls his Beloved to  
his Breast.

O Country so dear ! I behold thy blest  
Flame,  
And weep for the Glories that hallow  
thy Name ;  
A Name whose sweet Mention is Unction  
and Cure,  
As pure to the Soul as thy Æther is pure.  
Alone in thy Beauty, O fairest of Heights !  
So jocund with Laughter, so calm with  
Delights,  
Where Laurel and Cedar and Hyssop  
for all,  
Unite in gay Garlands on thy jasper Wall ;  
Where Synods celestial, thy Fabric, arise,  
Adorned with the Pearls and the Gems  
of the Skies ;  
But their Onyx and Topaz and Jewels  
unpriced,  
Are dimmed by the Lustre which circles  
their Christ.



O Day without Time, O Sea without  
Shore,  
O sweet Fountain flowing with Wine  
evermore,  
The Waters of Life come gushing alone,  
From thy Wells which are fet in the  
pure living Stone.  
Fair Bride! bedecked with the Laurel's  
best Flower,  
And graced with the Brightness of thy  
golden Dower,  
In Necklace of Lilies and Garments of  
White,  
Thy Lips shall be pressed by the Prince  
in Delight;  
And Canticles sweet shall be murmured  
along,  
And Love for thee breathed in conju-  
bilant Song.

O Syon so golden, O City so pure!  
Thy Beauty and Brightness what Heart  
can endure?  
I know not, I know not, the Joy and the  
Light  
Which in thy grand Portals will burst  
on my Sight,  
And vanquished I falter to utter thy  
Praise,  
Am conquered, exhausted, thy Glories  
to raise.  
Fair Syon! thy Halls are resounding  
with Song,  
Full, full of the Pæans of Earth's mar-  
tyred Throng,  
Bright Bands of the Blessed, their Prince  
stands between,  
And shining the City with Light aye  
serene.

There Pastures are flowing in unfading  
Spring,  
And there is the Throne of the Lamb  
and the King,  
And there is the Sound of the Song and  
the Feast,  
And there are the Saints and there is the  
Priest ;  
And there in our Syon, in calm, holy Seats,  
A Leader in Splendor his loved People  
meets.

When seen thou unfoldest, O City  
renowned,  
To the Eyes of the Soul thy Bleffings  
profound ;  
But the Light deep within me, the Edge  
of the mind,  
Alone while on Earth thy Bleffings can  
find ;

Still all Hearts burning now with Hope  
at thy Gate,  
Shall reach thy Rewards and possess  
them by Fate.

O Mansion unseen, O Syon so dear,  
For thee spreads the Joy, for myself  
flows the Tear;  
For my Flesh is of Earth, and earthward  
must keep,  
Far, far from the Gladness I yearn for  
and weep.

O City eternal, built safe on the Shore,  
Thy Walls and thy Turrets shine white  
evermore.  
Long hallowed thy Splendors, fair City  
of Peace,  
When Time and its Tumults, then silent,  
shall cease.

I seek thee and cherish, I mourn and I  
long  
For thy Beauties which kindle yet baffle  
my Song.  
But not by my Merits I ask for thy  
Breath,  
For by Merit 'tis mine to perish in  
Death;  
Yet in Hope will I walk along my lone  
Way,  
And demand thy Rewards by Night and  
by Day;  
Unceasing will seek, though blindly I  
grobe,  
Thy Rewards everlasting, in Faith and  
in Hope.  
For my Father, the best, the holiest  
One,  
Created in Light his now sinful Son.

In Light he created, in Light he sustains,  
And in Light yet will wash my Sins and  
my Pains ;

And the Fountain of David flows onward  
with me,

Still speeding and surging to its shoreless  
Sea ;

Aye healing and cleaning wherever it  
laves,

And the Vilest of Earth shall be washed  
by its Waves.



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